

GCFSM SUNDAY BULLETIN

JANUARY 12, 2024
BULLETIN ISSUE #02



SERMON OUTLINE

REFLECT AND REVEAL THE LIGHT AND THE GLORY OF CHRIST

ACTS 16:11-40
REV. DONG VILLATITO

Acts 16:11-40 recounts Paul's pioneering missionary journey to Philippi, a key Roman colony in Macedonia, marking the gospel's first arrival in Europe. This passage showcases God's sovereign role in advancing His church through three key events.

First, Paul meets Lydia, a wealthy merchant dealing in purple goods, among a group of worshippers by the river. God opened Lydia's heart to receive the gospel that led to her conversion, baptism and gracious hospitality toward Paul and his companions. Lydia's story demonstrates the gospel's transformative power, transcending social and economic boundaries, and initiating the establishment of the Philippian church.

Second, Paul encountered a slave girl possessed by a spirit of divination.

He cast out the spirit that freed her from spiritual oppression. However, this act angered her owners, who lost their source of profit. Enraged, they accused Paul and Silas falsely, leading to their public beating and imprisonment. Remarkably, Paul and Silas responded by praying and singing hymns in their cell at midnight.

God intervened through a miraculous earthquake that opened the prison doors. Yet, instead of fleeing, they remained, preventing the jailer's suicide. Their compassion led the jailer to ask, "What must I do to be saved?" He and his household received the gospel and were baptized, showcasing the gospel's ability to transform lives, even those in authority or despair.

Finally, Paul boldly asserted his rights as a Roman citizen, compelling the

magistrates to apologize for their unjust treatment. This moment highlights integrity and courage in addressing injustice while trusting God's providence in protecting His servants.

This passage underscores profound theological truths: God's sovereignty in spreading the gospel, the gospel's ability to transform individuals across social classes, the clash between gospel values and economic exploitation, and the power of faith and suffering in Christian witness. The events in Philippi reveal how God orchestrates both blessings and challenges to build His church, change lives, and proclaim His truth.

This message encourages us to trust in God's guidance and power, confident that He works through every circumstance for His glory. ✨

WORD, PRAYER AND FASTING

TEACHER CAROL FELIPE

Blessed New Year, GCF South Metro Family!

While celebrations have simmered down, I pray that our desire to be near the Lord in His Word and prayer is continually growing deep, tall and wide. As a discipling church, our prayer and desire is that we will always be excited for our time with the Lord through His Word and prayer. We also know from Scripture that the only way we can navigate challenges in life is when we are near the Lord. Challenges will come, opportunities in our personal lives and businesses will be presented. But as believers, we seek God's Word first before acting on perceived solutions and even saying "yes" to an enticing proposition. Truly, we need to hear from the Lord so that we can navigate 2025 by His wisdom and grace.

As we start the year right, let us allow the Spirit of God to teach, empower and embolden us. Let us take the time to enjoy the Lord in the following disciplines:

Enjoy God's Word. In Psalm 119, the writer teaches us the value of God's Word as he endures the challenges of his time. He affirms that the Word is a lamp to his feet and

a guide to his path (v. 105). He asserts it is his delight (v. 92). He acknowledges it is his hope (v. 81). And he attests God's Word is firmly settled in the heavens (v. 89). God's Word is wonderful and grants wisdom (vv. 129-130). These are just some affirmations of the beauty and majesty of God's Word! When the psalmist saw these, he declared "how sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth" (v. 103). This is what we want to experience as we go through the Scriptures together. Read, reflect, and respond to God's Word in such a way that you will long for it daily as you experience its transforming power in your life!

Enjoy Prayer Times. Prayer is great privilege. When God's people pray, we are assured the Lord knows and answers our prayers in His sovereign way and time. When we pray, we learn reliance on God as we put our full trust and faith in Him. When we pray, we lean into God's power and grace. When we pray, we learn to trust, entrust and surrender our all to Him knowing from the Word that He works all together for our good and His glory. As we pray, we embrace God's perfect will in our lives!

Enjoy Observing Fasts. Fasting is a discipline we need to learn and embrace. Biblical fasting is

withholding from food - not Netflix or social media. There is an aspect of withholding for the reason that we replace it with time with God, His Word and prayer. When we do, we learn to fix our hearts, minds and stomachs on the Lord, resulting to a more concentrated time with Him.

As we walk in 2025 God's mission and vision for His church, we need to grow deep in these disciplines. The year before us has many unknowns, but our God knows it all and He will lead to the right place at the right time in His perfect way. As He accomplishes all these for us, our posture should only be to KNOW God more and to TRUST God at all times.

Join us tomorrow until Friday for our Church Prayer and Fasting Week. We shall be broadcasting live our devotion and prayer time through Facebook and You Tube at 12:30 to 1:00 pm.

Let us lean in to God, His Word and Prayer. ✨

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